REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 7-8, 14-20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759).

Claims 3-5, 10-12, 21 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al.

Claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034).

Claims 6 and 13 are indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants amend independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 20-23 to further define the invention. Accordingly, claims 1-23 are presently pending.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 7-8, 14-20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759); claims 3-5, 10-12, 21 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al.; and claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims at least for the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 and 20-23, as amended, all recite an image processing device including, in part, "an output image data generation unit that performs a generation process to generate output image data from input image data and transmits the output image data to an output image data sending unit; the output image data sending unit that transmits the output

image data generated by the output image data generation unit to an image formation device, wherein the output image data generation unit waits to transmit the output image data to the output image data sending unit until the recognition unit completes the recognition process." Similarly, independent claims 8 and 15, as amended, respectively recite an image processing method and a storage medium readable by a computer, including in part, "transmitting the output image data to an output image data sending unit; transmitting the output image data from the output image data sending unit to an image formation device; wherein the process of generating the output image data waits to transmit the output image data to the output image data sending unit until the process of recognizing the specific image is completed." Applicants respectfully submit that at least these features of amended independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 20-23 are neither taught nor suggested by Hiraishi et al. and Bloomquist et al., whether taken singly or combined.

The Office Action alleges that Hiraishi et al. discloses the features of "the output data generation unit waits to send the output image data to an image formation device until the recognition unit completes the recognition process (col. 10, line 54 - col. 11, line 23, and FIG. 11). Furthermore, the Office Action appears to identify that the image process section 16 of Hiraishi et al. functions as that of the output generation unit 14 of the Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants respectfully disagree.

In contrast to the Applicants' claimed invention, Hiraishi et al. teaches at col. 10, line 54 - col. 11, line 23, and FIG. 11 that an image process section 16 is adapted to send the image data to storage section 17 and comparison/determination section 18. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the image process section 16 of Hiraishi et al. does not directly provide the output image data to the engine/interface 12 (i.e., image formation device), nor the comparison/determination section 18 and the recognition section 15 connect to the output image

data sending unit. In addition, while the output generation unit 14 of the Applicants' claimed invention is adapted to wait transmitting the output image data to the image data sending unit until the recognition unit completes the recognition, the image processing section 11 of Hiraishi et al. appears to start printing out the non-reproducible image on at least the first page without confirming the presence of the non-reproducible image in the input image data (col. 6, line 63 to col. 7, line 9).

Accordingly, in light of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that Hiraishi et al. fails to teach or suggest every element of at least independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 20-23, and thus Hiraishi et al. fails to anticipate at least independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20-23, and hence dependent claims 2-7, 9-14 and 16-19. Furthermore, Applicants assert that the Office Action does not rely on Bloomquist et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al. Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that Bloomquist et al. cannot remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a) should be withdrawn because the above-discussed novel combinations of features are neither taught nor suggested by any of the applied references, whether taken alone or in combination.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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